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**PATENT**

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

**IN THE APPLICATION OF:** Priestley et al  
**CASE NO.:** PH-7087-A  
**SERIAL NO.:** Unknown  
**FILING DATE:** December 6, 2001  
**GROUP NUMBER:** 1653  
**EXAMINER:** D. LUKTON  
**FOR:** NOVEL LACTAM INHIBITORS OF HEPATITIS C VIRUS NS3  
PROTEASE

**DATE:** December 6, 2001

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, DC 20231

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT AND FILING OF A NEW APPLICATION**  
**CLAIMING THE BENEFIT UNDER 35 U.S.C. §120 AND §119(e)**

Sir:

This Preliminary Amendment and the filing of a Continuation Application herewith is a bona fide attempt by Applicant to respond to the Office action dated June 8, 2001 in pending patent application USSN 09/626,286, filed July 25, 2000. A petition for a three month extension of time is being submitted concomitantly, via facsimile transmission, in pending patent application USSN 09/626,286, thus extending the due time for response in pending patent application USSN 09/626,286 until December 8, 2001, and extending the time for copendency until December 8, 2001. Thus, this filing of a Continuation Application and Preliminary Amendment is timely.

Claims 1-26 are pending.

Prior to examination on the merits please amend the above-identified application as follows without prejudice or waiver.

In the specification, before the first line, please insert:

--This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Application No. 09/626,286, filed July 25, 2000, which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/145,631, filed July 26, 1999.--

December 6, 2001

**SUMMARY**

The Claims of the present invention have been amended to place the application in form for allowance. Reconsideration and rapid allowance of pending Claims 1-26 are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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*Dec 6, 2001*